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ABSTRACT

This pilot study uses college faculty (n=10) and students (n=18) within American Psychological Association-approved department of counseling psychology programs to explore whether training programs are addressing religion as a component of diversity; how students with fundamental religious beliefs interact with members of their training program, both students and faculty, in the academic setting; and how students with fundamental religious beliefs are viewed within their training programs by students and faculty. Findings suggest that religion in general, and fundamentalist Bible-based beliefs specifically, are points of "uneasy" silence within the counseling training arena. This "uneasy" training program silence appears to mask strongly felt points of underlying contention among faculty, and among trainees, as well as between faculty and trainees. Many are choosing silence as a means of avoiding the assumed potential volatility that might ensue if discussion occurs. Fundamentalist trainees reported choosing silence to avoid penalty. In all silence, thought errors have the potential to flourish. Though the sample size is small, significant patterns were found that must be noted to better understand the impact of silence around religion on the climate within the training environment. An appendix provides comments from the faculty participants in response to survey items posted on the CCPTP listserv. (Contains 11 references and 6 tables.) (Author/MKA)

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Religion as an Important Component of Diversity: Religion in Counseling Training Programs

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Abstract

The literature suggests religion plays a significant role in the lives of many clients and is therefore a fundamental aspect of diversity. However, religion as a component of diversity curriculum for counselor trainees has been virtually ignored in the research literature despite its apparent social relevance. The purpose of this pilot study is to explore: a) if training programs are addressing religion as a component of diversity; b) how students with fundamental religious beliefs interact with members of their training program, both students and faculty, in the academic setting; and c) how students with fundamental religious beliefs are viewed within their training programs by students and faculty.

Literature Review

Introduction

Diversity training has been recognized as an issue of paramount importance in the education of future clinicians. Furthermore, multiculturalism has been identified as the "fourth force" which will revolutionize the mental health profession in the twentieth century (Pedersen, 1991; Steward, Morales, Bartell, Miller, Weeks, 1998). Although most counselor educators recognize the importance of multicultural training, some debate exists as to what variables multicultural training should encompass (Pate & Bondi,1992). Pedersen (1991) states that the multicultural perspective takes a broad view of culture and should include the following: "Ethnographic variables such as ethnicity, nationality, religion, and language, as well as demographic variables such as age, gender, and place of residence, and status variables such as social, economic, and educational factors" (p. 93). Within the multicultural variables mentioned by Pedersen (1991), religion is one aspect of diversity that is of emerging interest to many social scientists (Pate & Bondi, 1992). The apparent interest in religion as a component of multiculturalism may be due in large part to a) the relevance of religion to the general population, b) recent research highlighting the positive effects of religion on individual functioning and the counseling process, and c) the fact that religion has traditionally been ignored or considered maladaptive in the mental health field (Suyemoto & McDonald, 1996).

Relevance of Religion

Many individuals in the United States report religion as comprising a core component of their lives (Gallup, 1995). Ninety-two percent of the U.S. population is affiliated with a religion (McCullough, 1999). Furthermore, 96% of Americans profess a belief in God, 42% indicate that they attend religious worship service weekly, and 60% indicate that religion is "important" or

"very important" in their lives (Gallup, 1995). Conversely, while 90% of the general public reports adhering to a belief in God, only 43% of psychologists report adhering to a belief in God (Pate & Bondi, 1992). Traditionally, psychology has viewed religion as contributing to neurosis, pathological guilt, and a dependent state of being (Ellis, 1980; Suyemoto & MacDonald, 1996). This is perhaps due to psychology's early association with Freud (1953, 1964; Suyemoto & MacDonald, 1996) who believed that religion was a fiction created primarily as a defense mechanism. Other seminal writers and thinkers in the field such as Jung (1938; Suyemoto & MacDonald, 1996), Fromm (1950; Suyemoto & MacDonald, 1996), and Erikson (1950; Suyemoto & MacDonald, 1996) believed that religion could have positive as well as negative effects on an individual.

Positive Effects of Religion

A body of literature has formed citing the benefits of religion and the benefits of integrating religion and counseling. For example, religious involvement has been found to be positively associated with measures of mental health, such as lower degrees of depressive symptoms in adults and children, and less suicide (McCullough, 1999). A study by Suyemoto and MacDonald (1996) concluded that religious beliefs may serve many of the same functions that therapy often attempts to address (comfort, self-understanding, connection to others) and this in turn may enable therapists to view religious beliefs as possible resources in individual's lives. Suyemoto and MacDonald (1996) suggested that the data encourages further research into religious beliefs because religion may better help mental health service providers understand the motivations and needs of human beings and therefore better help individuals reach their full potential. Additionally, several research studies conducted this decade have posited that the consideration of the client's religiousness while designing treatment plans might have an important

effect on treatment and the conclusions of clinicians' structured psychological assessment (McCullough, 1999). McCullough (1999) recently performed the first known meta-analysis exploring research comparing religion-accommodative counseling with standard approaches to counseling. Specifically, McCullough (1999) examined the differential efficacy of the two approaches with depressed religious clients. Results of the meta-analysis indicated that immediately after counseling, neither counseling approach was superior or inferior. Therefore, although religious-accommodative approaches were seemingly no more effective than standard counseling approaches, it is conversely true that they were no less effective than standard approaches to counseling (McCullough, 1999). Data also indicated that most religious clients preferred an approach to counseling that dealt with religious issues peripherally, but not necessarily focally. However, many religious clients, particularly conservative "Christian" (p.95) clients, were likely attracted to a counseling approach or a counselor because the approach and the counselor maintained that the client's system of religious beliefs were at the core of psychological change (McCullough, 1999).

Positive and Negative Effects of Religion and Implications for Counseling

In addition to citing the benefits of religion on human functioning and of religion-accommodative counseling on the counseling process, recent research appears to support the notion that religion can have both positive and negative effects on individual functioning. Bergin's (1983) meta-analysis exploring religion and mental health found that 23% of studies reported religion as "detrimental" (Suyemoto & MacDonald, 1996, p. 144) while 47% reported positive effects of religious beliefs. According to Hanna, Myer, and Ottens (1994), one's conception of God may predict the positive or negative effects of religion on individual functioning. Hanna et.al. hypothesize that adults experiencing difficulties with authority, demonstrating contradictory

behaviors, or experiencing control issues may benefit from an examination of their early religious training. These types of issues may be conceptualized as dilemmas of a spiritual nature stemming from a lack of understanding regarding right and wrong, anxiety about the future, and a hesitancy to make decisions. Avenues of exploration may include examination of thoughts and emotions connected to an authoritative God who makes rigid decisions regarding one's present and one's destiny. An important implication of these findings is that although religion may contribute negatively to the functioning of some, it is important for counselors to understand religion so that these so called negative effects may be properly processed with these individuals.

Religion and Counselor Training

Despite statistics citing the relevance of religion to the general population and research highlighting positive and negative effects of religion on individual functioning and on the counseling process, no research, to the authors' awareness, has been conducted exploring how religion is being addressed within counselor training programs. Worthington (1989, 1996) identifies five reasons why religious values should be explored within counselor education: a) the majority of the population identifies itself as having religious beliefs; b) many people turn to religion when undergoing emotional crisis to manage their problems, even if they are not particularly active or have not been recently active in formal religion; c) many clients are inhibited in bringing up their religious considerations as a component of secular therapy; d) therapists are not generally as religious as their clients; and e) due to the fact that therapists are often not as religiously oriented as their clientele, many professional helpers are not as informed to be of maximum benefit to many of their clients.

Whether the clinician embraces the view that religion has a positive and/or a negative effect(s) on client functioning, the literature suggests religion plays a significant role in the lives of

many clients and is therefore a fundamental aspect of diversity. Religion as a component of diversity curriculum for counselor trainees has been virtually ignored in the research literature despite its apparent social relevance. Furthermore, the relevance of the intersection between religion and counseling is particularly salient, as McCullough (1999) highlights, to those individuals who identify as "conservative Christians" (p.95). The purpose of this pilot study therefore is to explore: a) if training programs are addressing religion as a component of diversity; b) how students with fundamental religious beliefs interact with members of their training program, both students and faculty, in the academic setting; and c) how students with fundamental religious beliefs are viewed within their training programs by students and faculty.

Methods

Participants

Participants included faculty and students within APA-approved departments of counseling psychology programs. Participating counseling psychology departments included both doctoral and masters level academic programs.

Faculty participants (n=10) represented training programs from every major U.S. geographical region. Five female faculty representatives and five male faculty representatives participated in the study. Student participants (n=18) represented training programs from the Midwest (50%), South (33%), and East Coast (11%). No responses were received from students in the Western United States. One individual originated from outside the United States. Fifty percent of the sample were White (n=9) while 39% were African-American (n=7). One individual was Indian (non-native American) and one individual self-identified as biracial. Seventy-eight percent (n=14) of the sample were female. Eighty-four percent (n=15) of the sample possessed a GPA of 3.5 or higher. None in the sample possessed a GPA of 2.9 or lower. The majority within

the sample (70%) reported that their parents (one or both) had attained a college degree or (one or both) had attained an advanced degree. The remaining (n=4) reported that their parents (one or both) had completed high school but neither or no parent had attained a college degree.

Procedure

Counseling psychology faculty were solicited via survey posted on the CCPTP list serve. Participants were asked to respond to the following five questions:

1. What portion of students in your training program do you believe hold a fundamental religious belief system?
2. Describe any training issues that you believe are unique to students who hold fundamental religious beliefs.
3. What behaviors have you observed among students that have contributed to your conclusions?
4. How would you rate the overall-counseling competency of individuals who hold fundamentalist religious beliefs with client populations that do not hold the same beliefs? [Likert scale ranging from 1(incompetent) to 5 (very competent)].
5. Is religion discussed in your training program as a relevant point of diversity in multicultural counseling coursework? In any coursework required by students? If not, why do you think this is so?

The survey posted to faculty was prefaced with an explanation of the study as one "examining directors' and faculty members' perceptions of trainees whom self-identify as having fundamentalist, Bible-based beliefs." The definition provided for a fundamentalist belief system was "having a Biblically-based belief system which is used to guide one's daily life and long-term decisions." Potential participants were notified that "findings will be included in a professional presentation and may potentially result in an article." Participants were also offered an opportunity to request a copy of responses received.

Student participants were mailed survey packets including researcher-addressed stamped envelopes. To ensure representation within the sample from trainees identifying as having fundamental religious beliefs, surveys were sent to student members of the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) and student members of APA Division 36. To ensure a random sample of counseling trainees, surveys were distributed to APA approved counseling psychology training programs in Southern, Midwestern, Western, and Eastern U.S. regions. The survey cover letter described the purpose of the study as an examination of how students with fundamental religious beliefs interact with members of their training program, both students and faculty, in the academic setting. A fundamental religious belief was defined as referring to "a Biblically-based belief system that is used to guide one's daily life and decision-making." Confidentiality and anonymity were assured by the fact that we did not request self or program identification on the survey instrument. An opportunity to participate in a raffle was offered to all that returned the surveys.

The first section of the researcher developed survey requested demographic information including age, multicultural courses taken, geographic origin, GPA, parent's level of education, race, and gender. Age, gender, and multicultural course experience were included in this section due to the established relationship that has been found between these factors and multicultural counseling competency (Steward, Morales, Bartell, Miller, & Weeks, 1998). Geographical origin was requested in order to provide additional background information about participants in this study for purposes of generalizability. GPA and parents' level of education were requested to provide some sense of the relationship between academic ability/history and acceptance or rejection of multiculturalism and religion.

The second section of the survey requested a general description of trainees' reaction to classroom sessions committed to multicultural literature presentation and discussion. Trainees were requested to indicate if their overall reaction to diversity-related content addressed in program courses was either positive or negative and if/how religion was discussed in these courses.

The third section of the survey included the following questions:

1. Do you use Bible-based principles to guide your daily life and decision-making? (yes or no)

2. To what degree do you think your belief, as indicated above, is represented in your program? (Likert scale ranging from 1=not at all to 7=completely)

3. Think about those students/faculty in your training program that do not accept your belief system. Briefly state your response/reaction to members of this group whose beliefs differ from those of your own.

4. What did they (those whose beliefs differed from those of your own) do or say to influence your response/reaction?

5. How do you think the student/faculty group whose beliefs differ from those of your own would rate your overall counselor competency? (Likert scale ranging from 1=incompetent to 7=fully competent)

Results

Student Survey

Results indicated that 83% (n=15) students identified as possessing a fundamental religious belief system. The three remaining students identified as not possessing a fundamental religious belief system. Table 1 presents the relationship between the presence or nonpresence of fundamental religious beliefs and perceived representation of the respective belief within participants' training programs. Seventy-two percent (n=13) of trainees reported possessing fundamental religious beliefs and the perception that their beliefs were represented "not at all"

within their program. Conversely, 11% (n=2) reported no fundamental religious belief system yet also held the perception that their belief was not well represented within their program. Two individuals identified with a fundamental religious belief system and reported moderate representation for such beliefs within their programs. The remaining subject reported being non-fundamental and perceived moderate representation for such beliefs within their program.

Table 2 presents the relationship between fundamental religious beliefs and multicultural course reaction. Seventy-two percent of the sample (n=13) responded "yes" to the possession of fundamental religious beliefs and also reported positive overall experiences within their multicultural course work. Seventeen percent (n=3) of the sample responded "no" to fundamental religious beliefs and reported positive overall experiences within their multicultural course work. Eleven percent (n=2) responded "yes" to fundamental religious beliefs and reported an overall negative perception of multicultural course work. Complaints from these individuals included under-representation of religious issues and overgeneralization of racial/ethnic groups. The remaining individual responded "no" to fundamentalism and reported an overall negative perception of multicultural course work. This individual reported a lack of multicultural coverage in their respective training program as responsible for their negative perception.

Table 3 presents the relationship between fundamental or nonfundamental beliefs and the estimation of cohort/faculty judgment of their counseling competency. Fifty-five percent of the sample (n=10) responded "yes" to fundamentalism and reported the likelihood of being perceived as having "average" counselor competence by others in their program. Twenty-two percent (n=4) responded "yes" to fundamentalism and correspondingly reported the likelihood of being perceived as being "fully" competent counselors. The majority of individuals (75%) responding "no" to fundamentalism reported being perceived in their programs as "fully" competent. Only

one individual reported a belief that they were likely perceived as "incompetent" within their training program. This individual responded "yes" to the possession of fundamental religious beliefs.

Table 4 presents a summary of student responses to the survey item, "If religion or religiosity was discussed in your diversity class/training, please describe how it was addressed." The most frequently stated response indicated that religion has been addressed as a part of respondent's training only in "passing". For most respondents, this meant that religion was given inordinate coverage within classes devoted to diversity issues or the issue was raised only by interested students and ensuingly processed only superficially. One individual responded that religion had been addressed only in terms of negative portrayals of its role within Manifest Destiny and the genocide of American Indians.

Table 5 presents a summary of fundamental religious students' responses to the survey item, "Think about the students/faculty in your training program that do not accept your fundamental belief system. Briefly state your response/reaction to members of this group whose beliefs differ from those of your own." A frequent response was that these individuals attempted to accept fellow classmates with differing beliefs but did not often feel a similar level of acceptance reciprocated. Students also reported feeling "alone" or "keeping quiet" so as to not "make waves" or "step on toes". No table is presented highlighting a summary of students who did not identify with a fundamental religious belief system responses to the same survey item because there were only three such individuals. Of these three students, one responded that they challenge the beliefs of the fundamentally religious so that they may find "merit" in their thought. A second student reported treating the fundamentally religious beliefs "like a food" they do not like. As long as the individual does not try to "force it down" their throats, they can tolerate the

fundamentally religious individual. The third respondent reported mutual respect for each other's differences and open valuing of differing belief systems.

Table 6 presents a summary of fundamental religious students' responses to the survey item, "What did they (those whose beliefs differed from those of your own) do or say to influence your response/reaction?" The most frequent response was that the fundamental religious students often were told by others "I respect your beliefs but do not force them on me." Within this response, many of these students reported feeling a minimization of their beliefs or a lack of willingness to discuss the issue at any length. Three students reported an inability to discuss religion at all while three reported experiencing open dialogue on the topic. Some students (n=2) reported experiencing misperceptions because of their beliefs such as not being asked to attend social gatherings where alcohol may be present or that they were "anti-gay." No table presents a summary of students who did not identify with a fundamental religious belief system responses to the same survey item because only three responses were provided. Interestingly, the one non-fundamental individual who previously reported a mutual respecting of differences and beliefs reported that fundamental individuals with whom contact exists are "affirmative of my sexual orientation, which is not a common attitude in fundamentalist and Christian teachings."

Faculty Survey

The appendix presents a summary of results for faculty responses to each of the five survey questions. Respondents are seemingly divided between those who address the issue from a pro-fundamentalist position versus those who address the issue from a nonfundamentalist perspective. The majority of faculty respondents reported a 5-10% fundamental religious student representation within their programs. One faculty respondent in the Southern United States reported 80% representation and attributed this to the strong presence of the Southern Baptist

church in the region. Training issues unique to students who hold fundamental religious beliefs centered around either a) working through stereotypes that these individuals are rigid and unable to work with some populations, or b) the belief that these individuals are rigid and unable to work with some populations. Many faculty reported an inability or an unwillingness to rate the overall-counseling competency of fundamental religious students. Some contrasts did, however, emerge. For example, one faculty respondent rated the fundamental religious students as highly competent because "they have to work doubly hard" to demonstrate competence. Conversely, one faculty respondent did not provide a rating but offered the statement "I really think they may be dangerous in insidious ways." The average faculty rating for the competence of fundamental religious students was that of adequate competence. Regarding the presence of religion as a component of diversity within the respondents' respective training programs, faculty were evenly divided between reports of adequate coverage and inadequate coverage.

Discussion

The purpose of this pilot study was to explore: a) if training programs are addressing religion as a component of diversity; b) how students with fundamental religious beliefs interact with members of their training program, both students and faculty, in the academic setting; and c) how students with fundamental religious beliefs are viewed within their training programs by students and faculty. Findings suggest that religion, in general, and fundamentalist Bible based beliefs specifically, are points of "uneasy" silence within the Counseling training arena. This 'uneasy' training program silence appears to mask strongly felt points of underlying contention among faculty, among trainees, as well as between faculty and trainees. Many are choosing silence as a means of avoiding the assumed potential volatility that might ensue if discussion occurs.

Fundamentalist trainees reported choosing silence to avoid penalty. In all silence, thought errors have the potential to flourish.

Though the sample size is small, the authors believe that there were some patterns that must be noted in our better understanding the impact of silence around religion on the climate within the training environment. First, as in other cases of diversity, the silence fosters a focus on points of contention between the two groups and does not allow all parties to explore and attend to similarities in experience during training. It is clear that the belief in God and the Bible, considered God's word, as a means of guiding one's life, is a point of contention that may be and may need to remain unresolvable. Nevertheless, comments indicated that fundamentalists and non-fundamentalists do share commonalties in experience. One commonality revolves around perceptions of 'the other'. Some faculty and non-fundamentalist trainees report experiencing fundamentalists as judgmental and closed, and who have the potential to directly or indirectly harm both peers and clients, particularly gay and lesbian individuals, with 'rigid' beliefs and attitudes about right and wrong. Other faculty and fundamentalist trainees report experiencing non-fundamentalists as prejudiced, closed-minded, and apt to unfairly, directly or indirectly, and negatively penalize and evaluate those who publicly identify as religious. Some members of both groups appear to have been the recipient of offhanded comments by the 'other' that were considered discounting in out of classroom experiences with little or no opportunity or structure within the curriculum or courseware for follow-up discussion. It appears that this experienced harm to self and, to others one values, tend to fuel generalizations about all members of a group. Fundamentalists may have concluded that training arenas are void of those individuals who might evaluate them fairly in spite of differences in values; and, those who do not embrace fundamentalist beliefs might have prematurely assumed that all fundamentalists are worthy of

negative evaluation and suspect. Within the silence, misperceptions can flourish and the profession is absolved of assuming the ethical responsibility to create a training environment wherein all points of diversity are acknowledged as meaningful, without a negative valence and an expected negative outcome based upon values and not competence. Second, specifically related to the potential for the development of faulty assumptions highlighting the points indicated above, findings suggest that within group diversity appears to be evident among those who embrace Bible based religious fundamentalism and those who do not. For example, among faculty there were those who perceived fundamentally religious trainees as dangerous and evaluated their counseling competence negatively, as well as those who, regardless of the religious beliefs, reported evaluating trainees' competence as individuals and not based upon their religious values and beliefs. Among trainees who did not embrace fundamentalist religious ideology, there was one who was gay who had positive and validating experiences with a fundamentalist colleague; and others who reported experiencing Bible based fundamentalists as judgmental and negatively biased against other points of diversity (i.e., gays and lesbians). Some among both groups were found to appreciate and value the content of multicultural course work and courses, while some among both groups did not. Results from this study tend to support the notion that Bible based fundamentalist individuals do not compose a monolithic group and as with all groups, faculty and trainees must be cautioned to avoid pre-judgments about others (i.e., clients, colleagues, trainees) solely based upon their expressed religious affiliation and identity. Given the comments from participants in this study, these authors believe that this prevailing absence of conversation on the topic of religion may have a direct and negative influence on the climate within the training environment, as well as limit the degree of developing counseling competence with clientele from diverse backgrounds. Though the silence around religion may allow for a

contrived and false calm within training settings wherein other points of diversity can be examined and explored, opportunities to teach all trainees to appropriately respond to those whose religious beliefs differ from their own are avoided.

Though some faculty in this study questioned fundamentalist trainees' competence in work with non-fundamentalist, which may be true for some; non-fundamentalists' competence to work with fundamentalist is questionable as well. It would seem critical that both groups are adequately prepared to respond to those who share religious views and those who don't. For example, both groups might assume, as some faculty and trainees in this study, that all clients who identify as Christian are the same when even these findings do not support this notion. Just as some fundamentalist trainees might be potentially 'harmful' to certain clients who are members of certain populations or clients with particular presenting problems; those who do not believe in God might equally have the potential to do harm to those who do. This is particularly important given the literature that highlights the importance of religion, with both negative and positive influences, in the lives of many individuals in general society. Religion is also noted as being tightly interwoven within the lives of some racial/ethnic populations and though we have attempted to separate the two in training due to our discomfort and biases, it may not be completely possible. In addition, given the extensive representation of individuals who believe in God within mainstream culture, it would seem critical that training experiences, at least to some degree beyond the silence, include attention to the development of competencies that will allow members to effectively meet the needs of this population as well. Likewise, the same limitations that can exist in training can also exist in supervisory relationships wherein there is mistrust based on thought errors about one another based on religious affiliation. This is particularly true given the power dynamic in which supervisees' religious attitudes might evaluate supervisors' evaluation of their counseling

competency. Supervisors may avoid the issues related to religion all together or become stuck in altering and/or refuting Bible based attitudes instead of assisting trainees toward acquiring the ability to effectively counsel all clients. In addition, fundamentally religious supervisees who have had negative experiences within training programs, may not share this belief with a supervisor which does not allow the supervisor this important piece in assisting the supervisee to develop ways of exploring and monitoring the influence of their own values in work with their clients. With fundamentally religious supervisors, non-believer supervisees might choose not to self-disclose with the potential for the same negative consequences. What can heighten the tension is the possibility that faculty and counseling supervisors with different beliefs may not consult one another as a means of developing strategies to sensitively and effectively address differences within student cohorts and may negatively evaluate trainees based upon their own blind spots and biases related to religion. The potential for this occurring is quite high given the large, majority representation of nonbelievers within Counseling. Training is limited by the silence. The authors believe that this work provides a significant contribution to the literature and this perception is supported in written comments from leaders in the profession who responded to the faculty survey. However, there are certainly some limitations that must be considered. As one faculty member predicted, the sample size was very small which limits generalizability of the findings. Second, though extensive efforts were made in sampling from a number of regions; the final sample was mostly composed of trainees within one setting. In addition, most of the trainees involved also reported that they identified with fundamentalist, Bible-based beliefs. Future research if certainly warranted.

Table 1

Fundamentalism and Perceived Representation Within Program

FUNDREP

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	13	72.2	72.2	72.2
	2.00	2	11.1	11.1	83.3
	3.00	2	11.1	11.1	94.4
	4.00	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	
Total		18	100.0		

note:
1= yes fundamental and little to no program representation
2= yes fundamental and average or unsure program representation
3= no fundamental and little to no program representation
4= no fundamental and average or unsure program representation

Table 2

Fundamentalism and Multicultural Training Reaction

FUNMCREA

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	13	72.2	72.2	72.2
	2.00	3	16.7	16.7	88.9
	3.00	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	
Total		18	100.0		

1= yes fundamental & positive mc reaction
2= no fundamental & positive mc reaction
3= yes fundamental & negative mc reaction

Table 3

Fundamentalism and Perceived Counselor Competency

FUNCNSCO

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	2.00	10	55.6	55.6	61.1
	3.00	4	22.2	22.2	83.3
	6.00	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	
Total		18	100.0		

1= yes fundamental & low perceived competence
2= yes fundamental & avg. perceived competence
3= yes fundamental & high perceived competence
6= no fundamental & high perceived competence

Table 4

Summary of student responses to the survey item, "If religion or religiosity was discussed in your diversity class/training, please describe how it was addressed."

Reaction	Number of Responses	Percentage
Mentioned in passing	8	44
Not discussed at all	6	33
Mentioned only negatively	1	7
Covered adequately	3	16

Table 5

Summary of students who identified as fundamentally religious responses to the survey item, "Think about the students/faculty in your training program that do not accept your fundamental belief system. Briefly state your response/reaction to members of this group whose beliefs differ from those of your own."

Reaction	Number of Responses	Percentage
Accept other yet feel alone	5	36
Try to understand others but also want to share own faith	6	43
Feel uncomfortable around them	1	7
Feel comfortable around them	2	14

Table 6

Summary of fundamental religious students' response to the survey item, "What did they (those whose beliefs differed from those of your own) do or say to influence your response/reaction?"

Reaction	Number of Responses	Percentage
"I respect your beliefs but don't force them on me"	5.5	39
Expressing a misunderstanding/ generalizations of what it means to be a Christian	2	14
Do not discuss it	3	21
Outright arguing	1.5	5
Normal dialogue	3	21

Appendix

Comments From Faculty in Response to Five Survey Items Posted on the CCPTP List Serve:

1. What portion of students in your training program do you believe hold a fundamental religious belief system?

- 5% (East)
- 80% (South). Higher proportions of M.A. trainees are religious.
- 10% (West). "This is an extremely difficult question to answer because most students in our program have found it an oppressive program in which to publicly identify their faith in Christ."
- 3-5% (East).
- 5-10% (Southwest)
- 5-15% (Southwest)
- 10% (Midwest)
- Can not be sure but best guess is around 5-10% (2).

2. Describe any training issues that you believe are unique to students who hold fundamental religious beliefs?

- Stigma associated with having a strong Christian faith.
- Distrust of their motives
- Disbelief that they can work effectively with a wide variety of clients
- Assumptions others make about them because of their faith.
- Assumed to posses rigid thinking particularly in relation to GLBT issues.
- To get faculty and students to acknowledge that such a diversity exists
- To work through deep-seated hostility, antipathy, and rigid stereotyping that people have concerning individuals with fundamental religious beliefs.
- Judgementalness, a belief in the rightness of everything they believe and crediting that to God's authority.
- Criticalness toward certain clients, e.g., adulterous clients or GLBT clients.
- "These students (fundamentally religious) seem to have more difficulty dealing with the ambiguity that comes from working in applied psychology."
- Making these individuals (fundamental religious trainees) aware of ethical implications of trying to convert the client to his/her value system.
- Lack of flexibility (on the part of fundamental religious trainees) in thinking about social constructs, client experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Lack of "affirmation" for LGB clients

3. What behaviors have you observed among students that have contributed to your conclusions?

- What they (fundamental religious students) have told me
- What I have heard others say about these students
- The students' reluctance to talk about how their faith influences their clinical work and research.
- Some fundamental students have a difficult time considering interventions with GLBT clients.
- Faculty and non-religious students ignore at best, oppress at worst, awareness that this diversity exists.
- Students have plotted to have faculty possessing fundamentalist views fired, not hired, and disrespected.
- The fundamental religious students are concrete thinkers who intimidate peers and some faculty. We want to avoid confronting them so often ignore the whole thing.
- Rigidity of ideas (fundamentally religious trainees) in practicum class.
- Rigidity (on the part of fundamentally religious trainees) gets in the way of their adaptability.
- Students with fundamental beliefs have described the "fact" that there are absolutes that come from God; therefore, some have said, it is impossible to be really empathic with some client struggles.
- Quotes such as "I know as a counseling psychologist I am supposed to be LGB affirming but as a Christian, I'm supposed to abhor non-heterosexuality."

4. How would you rate the overall-counseling competency of individuals who hold fundamentalist religious beliefs with client populations that do not hold the same beliefs?

[Likert scale ranging from 1 (incompetent), 3 (adequately competent), 5 (very competent)].

- 3—depends upon client presenting issue.
- 5—" in our program, such students have to work doubly hard to show their acceptance of and ability to work with diverse clients…the antipathy of faculty to such faith perspectives is so strong that the knowledge of the faith of such students would cause faculty in our program to rate such students slightly lower."
- "I can't do this (make a rating) but I really think they (fundamentally religious students) may be dangerous in insidious ways."
- Usually 3 but it varies by student and client.
- About 2-3
- 5 "I find these individuals to be as competent as other students."
- " I just cannot make this kind of generalization."

5. Is religion discussed in your training program as a relevant point of diversity in multicultural counseling coursework? In any coursework required by your students? If not, why do you think this is so?

- Yes (2).
- "Religion is not a major component of graduate level MC course but it is considered a variable in discussions. Students indicated last semester that the MC course is the only course where religion is actively discussed and they seemed relieved to discuss it."
- No. "Most faculty and students I have encountered hold the type of rigid and negative views towards people of Christian faith that they fear such Christians have."
- "I think only in superficial ways, probably because faculty and students avoid confronting painful and anxiety-provoking areas."
- "Yes. We have a training session on the impact of our own religious views and the effect of such views on the therapeutic process."
- "Yes. We devote a day to religion spirituality in our MC course and many faculty try to infuse such issues into our other courses."

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